United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/944
1 August 1991

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

♠ Plan to provide long-term economic, social and humanitarian aid to victims of Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster announced at United Nations Office at Geneva.

♠ Secretary-General receives Special Commission plan for long-term monitoring of Iraqi weapons installations.

♠ Chairman of General Assembly's First Committee welcomes strategic arms reduction agreement between Soviet Union and United States.

♠ China's northeast provinces face new threat of floods from continuous heavy rainfall, recorded at about 238 millimetres or 9.5 inches in some areas.

♠ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) hands over Iraqi soldiers held captive in northern Iraq; steps up food aid to southern Sudan.

* * *

A plan to provide long-term economic, social and humanitarian aid for victims of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Soviet Union was announced today in Vienna.

Making the announcement was the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, Margaret J. Anstee, who is the coordinator for United Nations activities relating to Chernobyl.

Outlining the plan, Miss Anstee said that, as released, the programme will form the basis for the Chernobyl pledging conference, which the Secretary-General is convening in New York on 20 September, in response to a 1990 Assembly resolution requesting him to coordinate a programme of cooperation to alleviate the economic and social consequences of the 1986 disaster.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Miss Anstee said the plan, which includes profiles of some 140 projects, requests an initial $650 million in pledges from the international community. She added, however, that more feasibility studies would need to be done by potential donors and donor organizations to determine additional needs.

She said the disaster, which occurred five years ago, and which has been called the worst nuclear disaster in human history, showed that there were many lessons to be learned from Chernobyl, among which was how to avoid such an accident ever happening again.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar today received the long-term plan of the Special Commission concerning the monitoring and verification of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

A United Nations spokesman said the Secretary-General would review and authorize the plan before passing it on to the Security Council today.

* * *

The Chairman of the Assembly's First Committee (Political and Security), Jai Pratap Rana (Nepal), has welcomed the signing by the Presidents of the United States and the Soviet Union of an agreement on strategic arms reduction.

In a statement issued at Headquarters today, the Chairman called the agreement "a historic contribution to international efforts to achieve general and complete disarmament and a more peaceful and secure world".

He said it was especially significant that, for the first time, the two major nuclear Powers had undertaken to begin actual reductions in their strategic nuclear arsenals. He expressed the hope that the development would lead to further substantial progress in nuclear disarmament efforts.

* * *

China's northeast provinces are facing a new threat of floods as water levels from the tributaries of two major rivers continue to rise following heavy rainfall, recorded at about 238 millimetres, or 9.5 inches in some areas.

A press release from the Chinese Mission to the United Nations reports that more flooding is expected, and that State flood-control officials are urging local authorities to take preventive measures to address the situation.

According to the report, downpours during the past three days have affected eastern regions, including the area's two largest cities, Beijing and Tianjing.

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Donations received to date totalled $32 million from domestic sources. China has appealed to the international community for relief assistance.

* * *

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) announced that it has taken part in the hand-over of more than 1,000 Iraqi soldiers to Iraqi authorities. The soldiers had been held captive in northern Iraq following clashes in the Sulaimaniya area in mid-July. The ICRC said it provided transportation, food and medical assistance, in cooperation with all the parties involved.

In southern Sudan, ICRC has stepped up its deliveries of food aid to three regions controlled by the opposition. Those operations began on 26 July. The Agency is also continuing its relief flights to other areas.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/945
2 August 1991

F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- One year after Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Secretary-General reaffirms United Nations commitment to helping Kuwaitis repair war damages.

- Security Council receives two reports on ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

- Disarmament Commission continues work in Geneva, with special focus on the signing of strategic arms reduction agreement, preventing arms race in outer space and chemical weapons convention.

- Micronesia and Marshall Islands request United Nations membership.

- Honduras informs United Nations of border incident involving FMLN.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar today reaffirmed the commitment of the United Nations to helping Kuwaitis repair war damages.

In a statement issued on the occasion of the first anniversary of the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, the Secretary-General said "relief that the invasion has been reversed is tempered by the awareness of the enormous tasks now confronting Kuwait and other countries of the region that were adversely affected by the crisis".

The Secretary-General said that "in the face of continuing suffering by millions of innocent people, various agencies of the United Nations family are working in conjunction with many non-governmental and humanitarian organizations to offer emergency relief and to assist in the process of reconstruction and development".

He said it was his heartfelt wish that lasting peace would be established in the region, leading to a new era of justice and harmony, based on the principles of the United Nations Charter.

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For information media—not an official record

The Security Council has received two reports dealing with the future ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, as called for in its resolution 687 (1991).

One plan, from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), deals with nuclear materials, while the other, a report from the Secretary-General, which was prepared in close cooperation with the Special Commission, deals with Iraq's long-range ballistic missiles and chemical and biological weapons.

Both plans must be approved by the Council before they take effect. Both call for the continued monitoring and verification of declared and non-declared military and civilian sites, facilities and material to ensure that Iraq does not use, retain, possess, develop, construct or otherwise acquire any long-range ballistic missiles, chemical and biological weapons and nuclear-weapons-usable material. Both plans would remain in force as long as the Council decided.

The plan on long-range ballistic missiles, chemical and biological weapons would be carried out by a Compliance Unit to be organized under the Special Commission, and financing would be determined by the competent United Nations organs.

To ensure that no weapons materials are imported to Iraq, the plan calls for the development of a mechanism, before sanctions are lifted, to uphold the prohibition on the sale and supply to Iraq of any weapons or related items. The mechanism would also provide for timely information about any sale or supply to Iraq of dual-purpose items.

The 46-page plan calls on Iraq to provide to the Special Commission, within 30 days after the plan is approved by the Council, and thereafter on a regular basis, full, correct and timely information on activities, sites, facilities, material and other items, both military and civilian, that might be used for purposes prohibited in the cease-fire resolution.

The Special Commission would have the right to inspect, at any time and without hindrance, any activity, material or facility, and to carry out air surveillances over any part of Iraqi territory. In addition, the Special Commission would have the right to stop and inspect vehicles, ships, aircraft or any other means of transportation within Iraq, and to inspect imports or exports upon arrival or departure.

The plan specifies that Iraq must cooperate fully with the Special Commission in all aspects of its work, including the allowance of unrestricted freedom of entry into and exit from Iraq without delay or hindrance.

Annexed to the report are separate lists of chemicals, biological items and materials used in missile production, which require close monitoring.

The Special Commission would, through the Secretary-General, report to the Security Council every six months on the implementation of the plan, and at any other time the Council might request.

(more)

The IAEA plan on nuclear materials, which has been described as "the most stringent in United Nations history", was handed over to the Secretary-General on 1 August by IAEA Director-General Hans Blix, for presentation to the Security Council.

Under the terms of that plan, Iraq is obliged to supply the Agency with an inventory of its nuclear weapons and nuclear-weapons-usable materials and installations, as well as equipment and non-nuclear material, and notify the Agency of any changes one month before they are made.

The Agency requires complete design information for any planned nuclear installations 180 days before construction begins. It also requires the right to full and free access at any time to all locations, all persons and all information it decides is necessary for the verification programme. In addition, the IAEA plan stipulates freedom of entry and exit to Iraq for Agency experts and United Nations personnel, supplies and equipment.

Under the plan, Iraq must declare all locations, amounts and types of weapons to the Secretary-General and the IAEA Director-General within 15 days of approval of the plan by the Security Council.

Iraq is also required to place all of its nuclear-weapons-usable materials under the exclusive control of IAEA for custody and removal, and to accept urgent on-site inspections and destruction and removal or rendering harmless of all nuclear items.

The two-part plan comes amidst ongoing inspections of Iraqi nuclear weapons sites by IAEA in an effort to destroy that country's nuclear capability.

* * *

In Geneva, the Conference on Disarmament is continuing its general discussion, focusing on the recently concluded strategic arms reduction (START) agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union, concerns about chemical weapons and proposals for preventing an arms race in outer space.

On the signing of the historic START Treaty by Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev, Stephen J. Ledogar of the United States addressed the Conference, and said the ceremony represented a major achievement in securing a more stable, predictable balance at lower levels of nuclear forces.

Once ratified, he said, the Treaty which would have a duration of 15 years, would reduce each side's strategic nuclear weapons from their current level of between 10,000 and 11,000 weapons to between 8,000 and 9,000 weapons over a seven-year period. The agreement also included a major reduction in the most destabilizing weapons -- land-based ballistic missiles and their warheads -- he said, adding that the most important aspect of the Treaty was its contribution to increasing predictability and transparency.

(more)

Serguei Batsanov of the Soviet Union said there was a growing awareness of the absurdity of an overarmed world, and the Treaty symbolized an unprecedented determination to continue to carry out reductions of nuclear arms.

Gerard Errera of France introduced a working paper on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. He recalled that his country, in its recent disarmament plan, had proposed a "code of conduct in space" which would be applicable to both civilian and military satellites. He said the experience acquired on land showed clearly that establishing confidence-building and security measures could ultimately lead towards disarmament.

* * *

The Marshall Islands and Micronesia have applied for United Nations membership.

The applications of the two South Pacific countries, received from the Marshall Islands on 25 July, and from Micronesia on 17 July, have been transmitted to the General Assembly and Security Council by the Secretary-General for approval.

* * *

The Honduras Ministry of Foreign Affairs has reported that an armed attack has taken place on the border between El Salvador and Honduras. Preliminary indications are that two people were killed and six injured when elements of the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) attacked Honduran soldiers.

The report said "it was disquieting that attacks are being carried out against Honduran forces at a time when the promotion of peace in Central America is the main goal of the Central American Governments".

The incident has been reported to the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) for investigation. The information was transmitted to the Secretary-General in a letter dated 30 July, from the Permanent Representative of Honduras to the United Nations, Roberto Flores Bermudez.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/946
5 August 1991

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council holds consultations to review implementation of resolution 687 (1991) of 3 April.

- Secretary-General welcomes discussions between United States President, Greek Prime Minister and Turkish President on question of Cyprus; says are "helpful" to his mission of good offices.

- Secretary-General is encouraged by developments over the weekend which he says enhance prospects for launching negotiated settlement of Middle East situation.

- Iraq informs United Nations inspection team that it has carried out biological research for defensive military purposes.

- Permanent Observer for Republic of Korea meets with Secretary-General to discuss admission of South Korea to United Nations.

* * *

The Security Council continued today its informal consultations to review the provisions of its resolution 687 (1991) of 3 April, which set the terms for the cease-fire in the Persian Gulf conflict.

Speaking to correspondents after Council consultations, the United Kingdom's Permanent Representative, David Hannay, said the vast majority of the Council had taken the view that there was no justification for any changes in the sanctions regime, whether it was with regard to civilian imports into Iraq or with regard to the arms embargo, because of the non-compliance by the Iraqi Government with resolution 687 (1991).

In addition, Mr. Hannay said, Council members were continuing consultations at the moment on the humanitarian issues that were raised by the Secretary-General's Executive Delegate, Saddrudin Aga Khan. He said the 60-day and 120-day reviews, provided for under the resolution, had led to very broad support for the view that there was no justification for a change in the matter of imports into Iraq and the matter of arms trade.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The Council was currently discussing a resolution which would reinforce the powers of the Special Commission in certain respects, mainly in relation to the nuclear inspections, Mr. Hannay said.

* * *

The Secretary-General's spokeswoman told correspondents today that Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar had been in touch with leaders and senior officials of members of the Security Council, including United States President George Bush, concerning the question of Cyprus. She said Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar welcomed the personal effort made by President Bush in support of the Secretary-General's mission of good offices. The Secretary-General felt, she said, that the outcome of Mr. Bush's discussions with Prime Minister Constantine Mitsoutakis of Greece and President Turgut Ozal of Turkey was helpful to his efforts and also welcomed by the two leaders on Cyprus.

The spokeswoman went on to say that the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Cyprus, Oscar Camilion, and the Alternate Special Representative, Gustave Feissel, had just completed a first round of "useful talks" in Ankara, Athens, and with leaders of both communities in Cyprus. A second round of talks was to take place during the second half of August, after which the Secretary-General would report to the Security Council on his assessment of the situation.

* * *

The Secretary-General's spokeswoman said today that Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar had been following with great interest the visit of United States Secretary of State James Baker to the Middle East and North Africa. The Secretary-General was encouraged by developments over the weekend which indicated that progress was being made, and that the prospects for launching a negotiating process had been significantly enhanced, she said.

* * *

Iraq has informed a United Nations inspection team that it has carried out biological research for defensive military purposes, according to a statement issued by the United Nations Special Commission set up under Security Council resolution 687 (1991) on a cease-fire in the Gulf conflict.

Iraqi authorities said the research was begun in 1986 at a facility some 35 kilometres south-east of Baghdad and was terminated in August 1990, and that the agents on which the research was being carried out had been destroyed.

The Iraqi authorities told the United Nations team that the above information had been withheld until now "because it would have been misconstrued by the world at large". The Iraqis said that "no production or weaponization of biological agents" had taken place.

(more)

The 28-person inspection team of 24 experts from 9 countries (Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Soviet Union, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States, plus four support personnel) had been in Iraq since 2 August.

In a related development, United Kingdom Permanent Representative, David Hannay told correspondents today that Iraq had admitted, for the first time, to the existence of a programme to separate plutonium which had resulted in the production of a small amount of the material. He said the Council had received the information as a result of the fourth nuclear inspection team which is currently in Iraq.

In other news from the Gulf, the Officer-in-Charge of overseeing the return of Kuwaiti property, Richard Foran, has received information today that 225 gold bricks had been handed over to Kuwait at the Iraqi/Saudi Arabian border.

A United Nations spokesman said today that the goal of returning 300 gold bricks per day seemed realistic, and the return of the gold, bank notes and coins was expected to be completed in about one month.

* * *

The Permanent Observer for the Republic of Korea, Chang Hee Roe, met with the Secretary-General today to discuss the admission of South Korea to the United Nations.

Following the meeting, Chang Hee Roe told correspondents at a press conference that he was hopeful that the simultaneous admission of the two Koreas would result in the improvement of relations between the two countries.

He said the Security Council would probably take up the issue of Korean membership on Thursday and the General Assembly would vote on the issue on 17 September.

* *** *

United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/947
6 August 1991

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council refers to Committee of the Whole of Security Council, application of two Koreas, Micronesia and Marshall Islands for membership in the United Nations .

- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East protests to Israel against incident in West Bank at which Israeli soldiers allegedly threw live grenade into vehicle of the Agency's Refugee Affairs officer.

- Secretary-General expresses gratification that agreement has been reached between Indonesia and Portugal on pending issues relating to question of East Timor.

* * *

The Security Council held a series of brief formal meetings at noon today and referred to its Committee of the Whole the applications for United Nations membership by Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea.

A United Nations spokeswoman told correspondents that the Council's Committee on Admission would meet in closed session and make a recommendation on each of the four requests. A draft resolution would then be submitted to the Council.

The Security Council will meet again on Thursday, 8 August, to consider and take a decision on the report of the Committee on the Admission of New Members.

* * *

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has protested to the Israeli authorities about an incident last week in the West Bank refugee camp of Balata in which Israeli soldiers allegedly threw a live grenade into the vehicle of an UNRWA Refugee Affairs officer.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The Refugee Affairs officer, a Norwegian national, and his Palestinian assistant were affected by the fumes but did not require medical treatment and later resumed their duties.

The UNRWA's Director of Operations in the West Bank, Yves Besson, has sent the head of the Israeli Civil Administration, Brigadier-General Gadi Zohar, a note of protest about "this most serious incident in which members of the Israeli security forces violated the privileges and immunities of UNRWA". Mr. Benson asked for an investigation to be carried out into the incident.

* * *

A United Nations spokeswoman told correspondents today that the Secretary-General was gratified that Indonesian and Portuguese authorities had now reached agreement on a number of pending issues related to a proposed visit by a Portuguese Parliamentary delegation to East Timor.

She said that, at a meeting on 27 June, representatives of Indonesia and Portugal to the United Nations held talks on the question of East Timor under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General. At that meeting, she said, the two sides agreed to transmit for the approval of their competent authorities agreement on the question.

Talks between the two sides are expected to resume on 12 August in New York.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/947/Corr.1
7 August 1991

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

CORRECTION

In Press Release DH/947, issued on 6 August, the second headline should read as follows:

♦ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East protests to Israel against incident in West Bank at which Israeli soldiers allegedly threw live tear-gas grenade into vehicle of the Agency's Refugee Affairs officer.

The second story should read as follows:

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has protested to the Israeli authorities about an incident last week in the West Bank refugee camp of Balata in which Israeli soldiers allegedly threw a live tear-gas grenade into the vehicle of an UNRWA Refugee Affairs officer.

The Refugee Affairs officer, a Norwegian national, and his Palestinian assistant were affected by the fumes but did not require medical treatment and later resumed their duties.

The UNRWA's Director of Operations in the West Bank, Yves Besson, has sent the head of the Israeli Civil Administration, Brigadier-General Gadi Zohar, a note of protest about "this most serious incident in which members of the Israeli security forces violated the privileges and immunities of UNRWA". Mr. Besson asked for an investigation to be carried out into the incident.

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For information media—not an official record

United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/948
7 August 1991

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council continues consultations to review implementation of resolution 687 (1991).

- Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights describes past year as one of serious challenges to basic principles of international relations and respect for human rights.

* * *

The Security Council this afternoon continued consultations to review Iraq's implementation of resolution 687 (1991) that set the conditions for a cease-fire in the Persian Gulf conflict -- in particular the paragraphs that concern Iraq's nuclear capability.

Speaking to correspondents following the consultations, Thomas R. Pickering, United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations, said the Council was close to coming up with a draft resolution dealing with Iraq's nuclear violations. In addition, he said, the Council was preparing a resolution which would allow Iraq to export oil in order to meet humanitarian needs.

In a related development, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) yesterday called Iraq's failure to declare its plutonium programme to the Agency "clear non-compliance" with its safeguards agreement.

Iraq recently provided details of the programme to the nuclear inspection team which is currently in that country. The information concerned details of experimental activities that involved the separation of 3 grams of plutonium -- a potential nuclear-weapons-usable material -- from irradiated fuel rods.

Although Iraq had already reported these activities to IAEA in June, the Agency said that Iraq's "failure to declare the activities in a timely fashion" under its safeguards agreement constitutes clear non-compliance.

In other news from the region, Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has denied having any contact with the Islamic Jihad concerning the release of

(more)

For information media--not an official record

the remaining Western hostages in Lebanon. However, he told correspondents today that he would be willing to meet with representatives of the Islamic Jihad to discuss the issue, either in New York or elsewhere.

The Secretary-General is scheduled to go to Geneva at the end of the week to meet with United Nations agencies to discuss relief operations in Iraq and the rest of the Gulf.

* * *

Opening the forty-third session of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in Geneva on Monday, Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, Jan Martenson, described the past year as one of serious challenges to the basic principles of international relations and respect for human rights.

Mr. Martenson stated that in the aftermath of the Gulf war, concrete steps had been taken to protect the human rights of the vulnerable groups in the area.

Also addressing the opening meeting, the newly elected President of the Subcommission for this year, Louis Joinet of France, stressed the importance of the Subcommission's independent character. He said it would examine situations which revealed a consistent pattern of violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any country, including the latest developments in South Africa, the occupied territories in the Middle East, Iran and El Salvador.

During the session, which will last three weeks, participants will discuss, among other things, questions of racial and religious discrimination; discrimination against indigenous people; the existence of contemporary forms of slavery and human rights; and the administration of justice.

A principal subsidiary body of the Commission on Human Rights, the Subcommission consists of 26 human rights experts including law professors, jurists and lawyers, who are selected from the five geographical regions of the world but are serving in their individual capacities.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/949
8 August 1991

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General welcomes release of British hostage held by Islamic Jihad in Lebanon.

- Security Council unanimously votes to admit the two Koreas as Members of United Nations.

- Secretary-General of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Brazil next summer, calls for concrete commitments to improve environmentally destructive and economically unjust world.

- Special Committee on decolonization hears proposal for round-table discussions on future of East Timor to include staged peace process beginning with cease-fire and establishment of United Nations peace-keeping force.

- New Secretary-General of International Civil Aviation Organization appointed.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar this morning commented on the release of John McCarthy, a British hostage held in Lebanon by the Islamic Jihad, saying that he hoped an American hostage -- he did not know which one -- would be released today or tomorrow.

The Secretary-General told correspondents that he expected to receive this weekend a letter containing "a very important message" from the Islamic Jihad, which the British hostage was to hand over to him in person. He said that the important thing was that the release of the hostage had taken place with no conditions.

A couple of days ago, the Secretary-General sent his assistant for special assignments Giandomenico Picco, to Damascus to be a witness to the release of the hostages.

The Secretary-General is expected to go to Geneva tomorrow.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

* * *

The Security Council today voted unanimously to admit the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea as Members of the United Nations.

Speaking to correspondents the Secretary-General said he was encouraged by the new memberships to the United Nations, which went towards the universalization of the Organization.

The applications by the two Koreas must also be approved by the General Assembly which is scheduled to take up the issue on the opening day of its forthcoming session, 17 September. Two South Pacific States, the Marshall Islands and Micronesia, have also applied for membership.

The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea said, in a statement issued in connection with the Council's decision today, that his Government attached "great significance" to the fact that both Koreas had been admitted unanimously under a single resolution.

* * *

The Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Maurice Strong, told a news conference in Geneva today that he did not expect the international Conference scheduled for next June, to be a cure-all for the planet's environmental ills. But the Conference must produce concrete commitments aimed at putting an environmentally destructive and economically unjust world on a new, sustainable and fairer path.

Mr. Strong stressed the importance of redeploying funds from arms spending and uneconomical subsidies to financing the development of and accessibility to environmentally friendly technologies and policies and said that it was essential for world leaders to understand that the consequences of not making changes would be far greater than the costs of making them.

The political will to provide the financing necessary for developing countries to incorporate an environmental dimension in their policies would be one of the greatest challenges facing the conference, he declared.

The Committee preparing for the conference resumes its work -- its third session -- in Geneva on Monday. Mr. Strong described that meeting as a "critical transition point in the preparatory process".

* * *

A proposal for round-table discussions on the future of East Timor, which might include a staged peace process beginning with a cease-fire and the establishment of a United Nations peace-keeping force, was made yesterday in the Special Committee on decolonization.

(more)

The proposal was made by Merill Findlay, representative of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid. In a statement to the Committee, Mr. Findlay said a range of options for the future status of East Timor might be considered, from full independence to some form of "free association" between Indonesia and the Territory.

Petitioners who also addressed the meeting, stated that they deplored the alleged arbitrary arrest, detention, torture and execution of Timorese by the Indonesian military.

In a letter to the Acting Chairman of the Special Committee dated 6 August, the representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, Nana S. Sutresna, called any consideration of the question of East Timor "inappropriate". He said it would constitute unacceptable interference in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of a sovereign Member State. East Timor was occupied by Indonesian armed forces in 1975 and has been under Indonesian control since that time.

* * *

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which is concerned with the safe and orderly growth of international civil aviation, has a new Secretary-General. Philippe H.P. Rochat of Switzerland assumed his duties on 1 August, succeeding S.S. Sidhu of India who had been in office since 1988.

Mr. Rochat has a doctorate in Law received at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland. He began his career as a journalist, specializing in international affairs, and has held various post in Swiss aviation.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/950
9 August 1991

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General says taking of French hostage in Beirut "is most unhelpful" in his efforts to get all detainees released.

- Secretary-General expresses "deep concern" over recent military action in Western Sahara.

- Security Council unanimously recommends admission of Micronesia and Marshall Islands as members of United Nations; hears report by Secretary-General on United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador.

- Secretary-General says this year's observation of International Day of Solidarity with Women of South Africa comes at a time which "holds great promise".

- Executive Director of United Nations International Drug Control Programme to meet with President of Peru.

- British actor Roger Moore signs contract with United Nations Children's Fund to become its Special Representative for Film Arts.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar this morning commented on the taking of a French hostage, Jerome Leyraud, whom the kidnappers threatened to kill if the other hostages held in Lebanon were freed.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar told correspondents outside his residence that the kidnapping "in some ways" was "totally counter-productive" and "most unhelpful" in his efforts to get the remaining hostages released.

When asked if he had been in touch with the Israeli Government regarding the possibility of releasing some individuals detained by the Israeli authorities, the Secretary-General replied that he had not been in contact with that Government yet, but would be if necessary.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The Secretary-General said he was "still hopeful" that a second hostage would be released soon. He said he had been in contact with his sources in Beirut this morning and that they had expressed hope.

The Secretary-General said he had postponed his visit to London on his way to Geneva, until tomorrow . On Sunday, he is expected to meet freed British hostage, John McCarthy, who will hand over to him the message from the Islamic Jihad.

* * *

A United Nations spokeswoman said today that Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar was "deeply concerned" by the recent developments and the military action that has occurred in the Western Sahara.

The Secretary-General had appealed to all concerned to refrain from any action which would endanger the implementation of the United Nations Settlement Plan for the Western Sahara or jeopardize the truce which had hitherto existed. The spokeswoman said the appeal came in the light of the undertaking by both parties to refrain from any act which might lead to hostilities prior to the formal cease-fire on 6 September, to which both sides have agreed.

* * *

The Security Council this afternoon acted without a vote to recommend admission of two South Pacific States, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, to the United Nations.

In other developments, the Secretary-General briefed earlier today members of the Council on the first steps being taken by the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL).

In a statement to the Council, made available in Spanish only, the Secretary-General expressed concern about the safety of United Nations staff participating in the Mission. He said that he had already received complaints about cease-fire violations by the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN).

In a separate development concerning Central America, Foreign Minister of Honduras, Mario Carias Zapata, has asked the United Nations to establish observation posts along the border between Honduras and Nicaragua to prevent subversive elements from entering into the country.

In a letter addressed to the Chief Military Observer of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA), Mr. Zapata expressed concern over armed incidents which, he said, had occurred along the border recently involving elements opposed to the Nicaraguan Government.

The request for United Nations assistance was transmitted in a letter to the Secretary-General, dated 6 August, by the Permanent Representative of Honduras, Roberto Flores Bermudez.

(more)

* * *

The Special Committee against Apartheid this morning held a meeting to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of Women in South Africa. Prominent women from South Africa were invited to the meeting as special guests.

The observance marks the thirty-fifth anniversary of the demonstration staged on 9 August 1956 in Pretoria by more than 20,000 women to protest the extension of the pass laws to cover African women. Their action focused world attention on the injustices and indignities suffered by the black majority in South Africa.

In a message read out on his behalf at the meeting, the Secretary-General said the women of South Africa had borne a heavy burden over decades under the system of apartheid. They had faced an immense challenge -- often as heads of families -- to preserve the social fabric and instil in their children the ethics of work and the love of justice.

This year, the Secretary-General said, the International Day was being observed at a time which held great promise. The process under way in South Africa should lead, through negotiations, to a constitution that would provide for a united, non-racial, and democratic society.

In a related development, speakers addressing the Human Rights Commission, yesterday in Geneva, called on South Africa to ratify human rights instruments. They also recommended that continued pressure be applied in South Africa until full elimination of the remaining apartheid laws were implemented.

Several experts at the meeting stressed that black Africans would not necessarily be the immediate or substantial beneficiaries of any improvements resulting from the lifting of sanctions. They proposed that the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights Subcommission should be extended to monitor apartheid in transition in that country.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/951
12 August 1991

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

^ Secretary-General says he is "more hopeful than before" about prospects for comprehensive solution to hostage situation in both Lebanon and Israel.

^ Secretary-General meets in Geneva with French Foreign Minister, his Executive Delegate, and Special Representative.

^ Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament undertakes its own high-altitude aerial surveys over Iraq.

^ Secretary-General welcomes recommendations to reduce strength of United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission for greater efficiency and economy.

^ Kuwait asks Secretary-General to exert pressure on Iraq to secure release of Kuwaiti prisoners and detainees.

^ Secretary-General welcomes border agreements between Chile and Argentina.

^ Special Committee on decolonization calls for progress towards self-determination in New Caledonia.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar told a news conference today in Geneva that he was "more hopeful than before" about a solution to the situation of hostages held both in Israel and Lebanon, and that he intended to continue "strongly" in his efforts to seek the release of all the detainees.

Yesterday, in London, the Secretary-General met with the recently released British detainee, John McCarthy, who publicly handed over to the Secretary-General the letter from his captors, the Islamic Jihad organization.

In the letter, which was made public today at Headquarters, the Islamic Jihad promised to release all detainees within 24 hours if the

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For information media—not an official record

Secretary-General would make a personal endeavour, within a comprehensive solution, to secure the release of all detainees throughout the world.

Following his meeting with Mr. McCarthy yesterday, the Secretary-General told the press that Mr. McCarthy's presence with him and the release of United States detainee, Edward A. Tracy, and the French detainee, Jerome Leyraud, were "all expressions of goodwill". "My duty now", he said, "is to maintain my efforts with the cooperation of all countries directly or indirectly concerned". He said he remained fully committed to doing his best "until the end in order to totally solve this humanitarian problem". He would do whatever was necessary, he said, to obtain the release of the hostages, including going to the Middle East if he felt that was necessary.

* * *

Today, the Secretary-General met in Geneva with the Foreign Minister of France, Roland Dumas, with whom he discussed the international situation including the problem of the hostages, the situation in the Middle East, the question of the Persian Gulf, Yugoslavia and Cambodia.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar also met with his Executive Delegate, Sadruddin Aga Khan, with whom he reviewed the humanitarian situation in the Persian Gulf region.

Yesterday evening, upon his arrival in Geneva from London, the Secretary-General met the Coordinator for Lebanese Affairs in the Israeli Defense Ministry, Uri Lubrani, and the Deputy Director-General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Yohanan Bein. They reviewed the situation in the light of the release of the detainees, John McCarthy, Edward Tracy and Jerome Leyraud, and of the letter that had been sent by Mr. McCarthy's captors. The Secretary-General said he would continue his efforts.

The Secretary-General was scheduled to meet today, with his Special Representative in the Middle East, Eduard Brunner and the Federal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, Klaus Jacobi.

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A United Nations spokesman told correspondents today that the Special Commission, set up under Security Council resolution 687 (1991) to overlook Iraqi Disarmament, had decided to undertake its own high-altitude aerial surveys of Iraq in order to determine further designations of Iraqi weapon sites for inspection. The Commission is required to monitor and secure, on an ongoing basis, Iraqi compliance with the terms of the Council's resolution at designated and declared sites, and with regard to the movement of material and items from such sites.

The spokesman said the Commission had requested from the United States Government a high-altitude one-seater aircraft designed for making aerial

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surveys, and had confirmed that the first such flight by this aircraft had taken place "over the weekend". Photographs of all sites, locations, facilities and objects surveyed, would be provided to the Special Commission.

* * *

The Secretary-General has welcomed recommendations from the Chief Military Observer of United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) to reduce its strength in order to achieve greater efficiency and economy.

In a letter to the President of the Security Council, dated 6 August, the Secretary-General said that he had found the recommendations to be well-based, since the situation in UNIKOM's area of operations remained calm. The eventual reduction of some 45 per cent in the Mission's strength would produce "appreciable savings", he said.

He said it was his intention to approach the troop-contributing countries in order to effect the adjustments as quickly as possible to minimize administrative and personal inconvenience for all concerned.

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Kuwait has asked the Secretary-General to do "everything within his power" to exert pressure on the Iraqi authorities to secure the release of 1,839 Kuwaiti nationals, who, it says, are presently imprisoned or detained in Iraq.

In a letter to the Secretary-General, dated 8 August, the Permanent Representative of Kuwait, Mohammad A. Abulhasan, expressed hope that all States and international organization would condemn "the inhumane practices" of the Iraqi authorities in detaining thousands of Kuwaiti nationals and persons of other countries who are residents of Kuwait.

* * *

A United Nations spokesman said today that the Secretary-General welcomed the agreement signed recently by the Presidents of Chile and Argentina to find a solution to all outstanding differences regarding the borders between the two countries.

The spokesman said the Secretary-General expressed "deep satisfaction" with the display of understanding and solidarity, which was fully consistent with the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter.

The Agreement is based on the 1984 Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the two countries.

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The Special Committee on decolonization, currently meeting in New York, has adopted a resolution inviting all parties involved in the question of New Caledonia to continue promoting a framework for the peaceful progress of the Territory towards an act of self-determination in which all the options would be open, and which would safeguard the rights of all New Caledonians. The text of the resolution was sponsored by Fiji and Papua New Guinea.

In a statement before the Committee, Jacques Serimin Boenghi, petitioner from the Kanak Socialist Liberation Front (FLNKS), said that France still exercised its sovereignty over the colonized Kanak people, and called on the French Government to make every effort to support the independence process in the Territory.

Speaking on behalf of members of the South Pacific Forum (Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), the representative of Vanuatu, Robert Van Lierop, noted the positive measures taken by the French authorities in New Caledonia to promote equitable political, economic and social development in the Territory in order to provide a framework for its peaceful evolution to self-determination.

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United Nations

Press Release

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General continues to express optimism over hostage situation, saying basics are present for a swap between Israel and Lebanon.

- Secretary-General meets with Moroccan Foreign Minister and maintains position that 6 September should remain date for cease-fire in Western Sahara.

- UN Committee on Racial Discrimination calls on Iraq to provide more information so it can assess human rights situation in that country.

- Draft resolution is presented in Special Committee on Decolonization which would reaffirm right of people in Puerto Rico to self determination.

- UN Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities hears call for world conference on religious freedom.

- Caribbean countries request observer status for Caribbean Community at General Assembly.

- Eugene Adoboli appointed Executive Secretary of Joint Inspection Unit.

- UN study finds many transnational corporation activities to be environmentally sound.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar is in Geneva where he is continuing his intensive diplomatic efforts on the issue of the hostages.

Replying to questions today, the Secretary-General said he thought there was a basis for a swap between Israel and Lebanon with regard to hostages and detainees but the time frame depended on meeting which he would hold today and tomorrow. The positions of both sides were now known, he said, and it was up to him to bridge the gap. Asked about the distance between the two positions,

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the Secretary-General said "they are apart, but not that far apart -- it is not an ocean, I would say a river."

After receiving a message from the Islamic Jihad on Sunday, the Secretary-General met that evening with Israeli officials. He described their initial response as "rather positive", and added he was very pleased that the Israeli Foreign Minister had promised to help as much as possible. The Secretary-General told correspondents today that he hoped to meet with an Israeli envoy tomorrow to hear their official position on the issue.

Israel has stated that it will not consider releasing any detainees until it knows the whereabouts of seven Israelis believed to be in the hands of groups in Lebanon.

Today the Secretary-General said he had heard about the whereabouts of some of the Israelis but that he had to be very careful and not say anything which could undermine his efforts. "I have to be very careful at this stage," he told correspondents, "not to say anything which could be counterproductive".

Mr. Perez de Cuellar met yesterday with Iranian Ambassador Kamal Kharrazi, for a two-hour discussion on the hostage situation. He described it as "very helpful" and said that the Iranian Government was trying to use its influence with different groups to obtain the freedom of hostages.

The Secretary-General reiterated today that he was willing to go to the Middle East if necessary.

* * *

Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar met today with the Foreign Minister of Morocco, Abdellatif Filali, to discuss the overall situation in Western Sahara.

Following the meeting, the Secretary-General said that the exchange had been "extremely useful", and that many points had been cleared up. He had maintained his position that 6 September should be the date for the cease-fire between the Government of Morocco and the liberation front, POLISARIO, he added.

Last week, the Secretary-General released a statement calling attention to recent military action in the Western Sahara in which he appealed to all parties to maintain the truce until the formal cease-fire became effective.

Today the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) joined the appeal of Mr. Perez de Cuellar to the parties involved to refrain from any action that would undermine the process leading to the implementation of the Peace Plan. The OAU Secretary-General expressed the hope that the referendum would be held as planned, and thus bring about the final solution to the conflict in Western Sahara.

Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar told correspondents today in Geneva that he hopes to meet with representatives of POLISARIO around 25 or 26 August.

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The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has concluded that the failure of the Iraqi delegation to address the question of the treatment of ethnic groups in Iraq and of the citizens of Kuwait after 2 August 1990 is a matter of great concern.

In concluding remarks, the expert from Germany stressed that the Committee had not yet received information which would enable it to assess the human rights situation in Iraq. Accordingly, he called upon the Government of that country to include all the requested information in a report due later this year.

Addressing the Committee, the representative of Iraq said the Kurdish problem was not a question of racial discrimination but rather a situation that was fomented from abroad. He maintained that the Kurdish minority had never been socially nor economically disadvantaged in Iraq.

The Iraqi representative promised the future cooperation of his Government in providing the Committee with the full picture of the situation in his country as requested.

* * *

The Special Committee on decolonization would reaffirm the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence, in conformity with the Declaration on decolonization, according to a draft resolution introduced in that Committee by the representative of Venezuela.

The Committee heard from several petitioners on the political status of Puerto Rico since it opened debate on the subject yesterday. Many expressed support for the right of the Puerto Rican people to freely choose the island's future status, whether independence, statehood or a free association agreement with the United States. Some speakers called on the United States to end what they termed its colonial oppression of Puerto Rico.

The Committee concluded its hearing of petitioners today and is expected to take action on a revised version of the draft resolution tomorrow.

* * *

Members of the UN Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities have called for the convening of an international conference on religious freedom, with the participation of the three monotheistic religions.

The plea was made as the Subcommission took up the issue of the elimination of religious intolerance and discrimination at its current session in Geneva. Members said religious revivalism and fanaticism were leading to violence and instability in many parts of the world and that religion was often used as a vehicle for disguising other purposes, including political

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objectives. Some members called for an in-depth study of religious fanaticism.

Several non-governmental organizations urged that there be a binding international instrument on the freedom of religious belief.

* * *

Eleven Caribbean countries have requested that the Caribbean Community be granted observer status in the General Assembly.

The Community is a regional group which was established in 1974 to facilitate the economic integration of its members through the establishment of a common market, and to coordinate regional foreign policy.

The request was contained in a letter to the Secretary-General dated 1 August.

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Eugene Adoboli, a senior official of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), has been appointed Executive Secretary of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) by Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar. Mr. Adoboli, a citizen of Togo, began work for UNCTAD in 1963.

The JIU, which was established by the General Assembly in 1968, is based in Geneva. Its mandate is to enhance the administrative efficiency and proper use of funds of all specialized agencies of the United Nations system, with the exception of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

* * *

Transnational Corporations undertake a surprisingly broad array of activities which could be labelled "environmentally sound", according to the results of a benchmark survey conducted by the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations.

The survey which dealt with transnational corporations and the environment, included more than 200 of the world's biggest and most environmentally innovative transnational corporations. Its aim was to inform governments, international organizations and the broader public of the state of environmentally sound management in transnational corporations, and to set up a model framework for transnational corporations and other major firms not as yet engaged in environmental management.

Responding to the study, the corporations indicated that they considered protection of the atmosphere to be the most important issue of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), to be held from 1 to 12 June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro.

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The preliminary results of the survey have been released at the meeting of the UNCED preparatory Committee in Geneva.

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United Nations

Press Release

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General meets emissaries from Israeli Government in Geneva, who say they will consider release of Arab detainees only if they get evidence of fate of seven Israeli soldiers missing in Lebanon.

- United Nations inspection team reports on Iraq's biological capacity; finds no evidence of current stocks.

- Algeria expresses "deep regret" over recent resumption of military operations in Western Sahara.

- United Nations mission to Iran concludes that reconstruction of physical infrastructure, damaged in that country during Iran-Iraq conflict, will be costly and lengthy.

- First United Nations Development Programme field office in Albania inaugurated in capital city of Tirana.

- Third round of preparations for 1992 Conference on Environment and Development begins in Geneva.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar met today in Geneva with Israeli officials as he continued his efforts to free detainees in the Middle East.

Following the meeting a Geneva-based United Nations press officer reported that the Secretary-General, told a press conference that he had received strong support from the Israeli Government, which had reiterated its position however that it would consider release of its Arab detainees only when it had clear evidence of the fate of seven Israeli soldiers missing in Lebanon.

The Secretary-General said that the United Nations was the only channel through which Governments and groups holding hostages were communicating. "We are continuing", he said, "with renewed energy".

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Representing the Israeli Government at the meeting were the Coordinator for Lebanese Affairs in the Israeli Defense Ministry, Uri Lubrani; Deputy Director-General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Yohanan Bein; and Special Adviser to the Israeli Prime Minister, Ori Slonim.

The Secretary-General met earlier today with the Ambassador of Iraq to the United Nations, Barzan Al-Tikrite, to discuss various matters of common concern, including the question of Ian Douglas Richter, the British engineer detained in Iraq.

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David Kelly, the Chief Inspector of a United Nations mission, which visited Iraq to inspect sites for biological weapons today told correspondents at Headquarters that his team had found no evidence of any biological weapons per se, or of facility for filling such weapons. However, he said, the team had discovered, at one of the sites, a capability to research, produce, test and store biological warfare agents.

The inspection team was sent to Iraq by the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament, set up by the Security Council's resolution 687 (1991), to verify that country's claim that it had no biological weapons nor carried out any related activities.

In a statement read out on behalf of the Special Commission, Mr. Kelly said the team, which was made up of 28 experts in microbiology and biotechnology, safety, medicine and communication, had undertaken a full five-day inspection of the Iraqi biological site near Salman Pak. It also held discussions with Iraqi authorities from the Ministries of Health and Agriculture to define a base of microbiological activities within Iraq.

According to the statement, Iraq had handed over to the team, on the last day of the visit, a collection of biological materials which could be developed as biological warfare agents. At the same time, the statement said, Iraq stated that it would cease developing biological warfare agents.

This morning's press conference was also attended by the Executive Director of the Special Commission, Ambassador Rolf Ekeus.

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Algeria has noted "with deep regret" the recent resumption of military operations in Western Sahara.

In a letter to the Secretary-General of 12 August, the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it shared the Secretary-General's profound concern for "these dangerous developments" on the eve of the entry into force -- on 6 September -- of a cease-fire accepted by both parties to the conflict.

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Algeria reiterated its full support for the Secretary-General's peace-making efforts and encouraged him "to make every effort" to prevent any military escalation.

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The reconstruction of the physical infrastructure damaged in Iran during the conflict between that country and Iraq will be a costly and lengthy process, according to a report by a United Nations mission which visited Iran in June.

Led by former Under-Secretary-General Abdulrahim Farah, the mission was to obtain initial information on the nature and extent of damage sustained by Iran as a result of the conflict with Iraq.

In a report to the Security Council, dated 31 July, the team said that as the war was fought for the most part on Iranian territory, the consequences to its population, economy and environment were enormous.

The mission was impressed by the reconstruction efforts thus far undertaken. None the less, the report stated, access to financing resources, foreign equipment and technology from the international community would be necessary in order to fully reconstruct and rehabilitate the country within a reasonable period of time.

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The first United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) field office in Albania was inaugurated yesterday in the capital city of Tirana by the agency's Administrator, William H. Draper III.

Present at the inauguration were the country's Prime Minister, Ylli Bufi, other senior government officials and the newly-appointed UNDP Resident Representative to that country, Jean-Nicholas Marchal.

The UNDP was the first multilateral agency to start operations in Albania more than 15 years ago. In the past, technical assistance has ranged from computer technology to wine making. During the past year the emphasis has been on helping the country move from a centrally-planned to a market economy.

Today Albania, with an annual per capita income of $650 is the largest recipient of UNDP technical and financial support in central and eastern Europe. The UNDP is expected to provide some $5.9 million for Albania's Fifth Programming Cycle (1992-1996).

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Representatives from about 100 countries are currently gathered in Geneva for the third round of preparations for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development -- also called the Earth Summit -- to be held next summer in Brazil.

During the four-week session, which began on Monday 12 August and ends on 4 September, proposals for action that will sustain global economic growth and conserve the environment will be the focus of debate.

Participants are expected to discuss a plan of action for sustainable practices relating to land use, energy, freshwater, oceans, hazardous wastes including toxic chemicals, and forests. They will also consider proposals in areas of health, education, human settlements, food and environmental emergencies, among others.

Two previous rounds of preparations were held in Nairobi, August 1990, and in Geneva, March 1991.

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